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Pyithu Hluttaw holds 13th-day Meeting

Motion against formation of independent enquiry commission with one international person rejected by vote



Pyithu Hluttaw is being convened in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE 13th-day meeting of the eighth regular session of the second Pyithu Hluttaw was held yesterday morning, where a motion against Announcement 3/2018 of the Office of the President to form an Independent Commission of Enquiry with three members, including an international person, as part of the national initiative to address reconciliation, peace, stability and development in Rakhine, was voted down.

Earlier in the meeting, the approval of the Hluttaw on adding, transferring and removal of the Pyithu Hluttaw committee members was obtained, questions raised and answered. After the debate and vote on the motion

against Announcement 3/2018 was conducted, an announcement on the bill amending the Television and Broadcasting Law was made.

Addition, transfer and removal of committee members

The Hluttaw approved the adding of U Sai Win Aye @ U Sai Tun Aye of Mongshu constituency, U Lu Htae Han @ U Aung Shwe of Laukkai constituency, U Soe Htay of Kawkaik constituency, U Sai Aung Kyaw of Kehsi constituency, Dr. Daw Khin Sithu of Loikaw constituency, U Mya Sein of Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) constituency, U Aung Kyi Thein of Chaungzon constituency, U Win Min of Hlinethaya constituency and U Nay Kyaw of Dagon

Myothit (East) constituency as committee members, transfer of U Sai Pho Myat of Muse constituency to the Citizens Fundamental Rights Committee, and the removal of U Tin Htwe of Waw constituency from Citizens Fundamental Rights Committee, as he will be assigned another duty.

Question and answer session

Next, in the question and answer session, a question by U Maung Maung of Htigyaing constituency on expanding and transferring Htigyaing Myoma market in Htigyaing Township was answered by Deputy Minister of Commerce U Aung Htoo.

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Union Minister for Office of the State Counsellor participates in 24th International Conference on the Future of Asia in Japan

A Myanmar delegation led by U Kyaw Tint Swe, the Union Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor attended the 24th International Conference on the Future of Asia in Japan yesterday.

As the bilateral components, the Union Minister had met with His Excellency Mr Taro Kono, Minister for Foreign Affairs, H.E. Yoshihide Suga, Chief Cabinet Secretary, H.E. Mr Hiroshige Seko, Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry and Mr. Yohei Sasakawa, Special Envoy for National Reconciliation in Myanmar and Chairman of Nippon

Foundation.

During the courtesy calls, matters related to the progress of Myanmar's peace process, Myanmar's democratization process, the latest developments in Rakhine State, and Myanmar Government's in Rakhine State, particularly signing of the MoU between the Government of Myanmar, UNDP and UNHCR as well as announcement of formation of an Independent Commission on Enquiry were discussed.

The delegation departed for Japan from Yangon International Airport on 10 June.— Myanmar News Agency ■



Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe shakes hands with Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Taro Kono in Japan. **PHOTO: MNA**

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Pyithu Hluttaw holds 13th-day Meeting

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A question by U Min Kyi of Thandwe constituency on the designation of Ngapali dam area was answered by Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw. Another question by Dr. Than Aung Soe of Minhla constituency on the export of live cattle and buffaloes was also answered by the deputy minister for agriculture, livestock and irrigation.

Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw responded to questions posed by U Tin Ko Ko Oo @ U A Tut of Bilin constituency, Daw Wint War Tun of Shar Taw constituency and U Sai Tun Sein of Mongpyin constituency.

Motion against Office of the President announcement 3/2018

Later, 21 Hluttaw representatives discussed the urgent and important motion by U Sai Kyaw Moe of Mongpan constituency to deliberate/reconsider the formation of an Independent Commission of Enquiry with three members, including an international personal as part of the government's national initiative to address reconciliation, peace, stability and development in Rakhine. In consideration of the sov-

ereignty of the nation, trust and respect, the honour of the people of the country, the urgent and important motion instead urges the union government to decide on formation the commission of enquiry with only local experts.

In his discussion, U Ba Shein of Kyaukpyu constituency spoke about considering this as an internal affair of the country and to handle it as an internal affair. As the necessary steps were already being taken by the commission led by Vice President U Myint Swe, the commission of enquiry included in the Office of the President announcement 3/2018 shouldn't be formed. He added that if the commission is to be formed due to necessity, it should be formed with local experts.

U Thaung Aye of Pyawbwe constituency supported the motion and commented that countries around the world are protecting their territory, their people, their government and their sovereignty. Non-disintegration of the union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty are the duties that every citizen has to uphold and this is clearly stated in the Constitution. If the Rakhine issue is handled, we should be aware of the aim of the extremist terrorist groups to



Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw. PHOTO: MNA

obtain a specific land for a specific people, he said. Formation of the enquiry commission is similar to the aim of sending the government, the Tatmadaw and security forces to UN Security Council and ICC (International Criminal Court) taking fake news into consideration, he added. To protect the national sovereignty and the national interest, an enquiry commission with an international personal shouldn't be formed.

Similarly, U Aung Thaung Shwe of Buthidaung constituency, U Hla Htay Win of Zeyathiri constituency, Tatmadaw representative Col. Khin Maung Cho, Daw Yin Min Hlaing of Gangaw constituency, U Oo Hla Saw of Mrauk U constituency, U Sai Tun Sein of Mongpyin constituency,

Tatmadaw representative Lt-Col Min Thaw Aye, U Tin Htwe of Waw constituency, U Aung Kyaw Zin of Pauktaw constituency, Tatmadaw representative Lt-Col Soe Myint Aung, U Lwin Ko Latt of Thanlyin constituency, Tatmadaw representative Col. Myint Cho, Daw Khin Saw Wai of Rathedaung constituency, Daw Nan Htwe Thu of Pasawng constituency, Tatmadaw representative Lt-Col Kyaw Zin Win, Dr Daw Khin Soe Soe Kyi of Pyay constituency, Tatmadaw representative Lt-Col Win Ko, U Tin Tun Naing of Seikkyi-Khanaungto constituency and Dr. U Lin Lin Kyaw of Myittha constituency discussed the motion.

In his discussion on the motion, Deputy Minister for Ministry of State Counsellor's Office U Khin Maung Tin said to counter the suspicion and disbelief of the international community, it is important to respond with an aim of achieving a trustworthy situation that is acceptable by all that is within the frame of sovereignty of the country and international legal response.

All the Hluttaw representatives are aware of growing influence of non-governmental organisations in the international balance of power.

At a time when many Security Council members are putting

pressure, when attempts are made to open a case in International Criminal Court-ICC, when human rights organisations are increasing accusation against Myanmar, all need to understand the extent to which the dangerous situation can be escalated. As all possible outcomes were carefully considered and the best path is selected, the motion to form the commission only with local experts should not be approved, said the Deputy Minister.

U Sai Kyaw Moe than submitted his wish to approve the motion.

The motion was put to the vote, and rejected by 251 against, 138 for, with 3 abstention. Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker announced that the motion is turned down as the majority voted against it.

Bill amending the Television and Broadcasting Law

Following this, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat announced the receipt of the bill amending the Television and Broadcasting Law without amendment from Amyotha Hluttaw and to proceed further on it.

2nd Pyithu Hluttaw 8th regular session's 14th-day meeting is then announced to be held on 13 June. — Aye Aye Thant (MNA)

13th-day meeting of 2nd Amyotha Hluttaw's 8th regular session held

By Aung Ye Thwin
(MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY)

THE second Amyotha Hluttaw's eighth regular session held the 13th-day meeting yesterday morning at the Amyotha Hluttaw meeting hall, where a bill to amend the television and video law was approved.

At the meeting, asterisked questions were asked and answered, a bill approved and a report read.

Questions raised, answers given

U Kyaw Ni Naing of Shan State Constituency (11) posed a question on the plan to construct a new Yanlonkyaing-Laukkai-Mantungpa-Taukshwe-Kunlong road in Shan State, Kokant Self-administered Zone, to which Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Than Htut replied

that the road was 47 miles and 6 furlong long and the Yanlonkyaing-Laukkai was being upgraded to an asphalt road by the Ministry of Construction. As for constructing a new Yanlonkyaing-Laukkai-Mantungpa-Taukshwe-Kunlong road, the Yanlonkyaing-Laukkai-Mantungpa-Taukshwe road section will be completed in the first six months of the 2018-2019 fiscal year, and the remaining Taukshwe-Kunlong road section, a 5-mile-long earth road section, will be constructed with the union fund in the 2018-2019 fiscal year. The 10-mile-long earth road section is being proposed to be constructed with the Shan State government fund, said the deputy minister.

U Baw Rae Soe Wai of Kayah State constituency (3) then asked if there was a plan to pay a one-time lump-sum pen-



Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Than Htut. PHOTO: MNA

sion payment to elderly pensioners who had reached the age of 70. Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win said pensioners can get a certain amount of lump-sum pension payment in certain situations, but this would affect the long-term regular pension pay-



Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win. PHOTO: MNA

ment, which will in turn affect their livelihood. Furthermore, when the government adjusts and raises salaries and pensions to cover the cost of living, those who had exchanged a portion of their pension for a lump-sum payment earlier will be entitled to a raise in the remaining por-

tion of their pension, which will not be equal to the raise in the full portion. The government can pay regular pension in the long run but giving a lump-sum pension at the moment would significantly raise the expenditure.

As of 31 March 2018, the country has 938,511 pensioners, and the state is using Ks742 billion for pension, gratuities and other payments. The Ministry of Planning and Finance had conducted studies on providing lump-sum pension payment and found that it can only do this when the financial status of the State has improved. As such, it could not change the pension payment at the moment, and it has no plan to pay a one-time lump-sum pension payment to elderly pensioners who had reached the age of 70.

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Private newspapers, journals, magazines up monthly

Daw Yu Yu Win, Acting Director of the Department for Copyright and Registration, has issued permits monthly for publishing private publications including newspapers, journals and magazines. As of May, some 26 newspapers, 216 journals, and 212 magazines have been published in the current year.

She said the aforementioned number of publications

were permitted publishing and sent to the department, in accordance with the Printing and Distributing Law Section 11 and Bylaw Section 15.

From 1 January to 31 May, the Ministry of Information, in accordance with the law, has given publication permits to 11 news agencies, 33 printing houses, 15 journals, 17 magazines and 100 general publications.

Since the legislation on the Printing and Distributing Law on 10 October 2014, some 2,381 permits have been granted to 104 news agencies, 1,514 printing houses, 46 distribution agencies, 539 journals, 442 magazines, and 1,354 general publications. Further information are available at the ministry's website at www.moi.gov.mm. — Myanmar News Agency ■



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye and officials view TV showing activities of quick response to recent flash flood in Myanmar. **PHOTO: MNA**

Authorities coordinate handling of recent flash floods

A COORDINATION meeting was held yesterday at the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement to effectively administer humanitarian aid and disaster management concerning the recent flashfloods.

During the meeting Union Minister for SWRR, Dr. Win Myat Aye, met with Deputy Minister U Soe Aung, Director-General Dr. Ko Ko Naing, and officials talked about the recent flashfloods occurring around the country and discussed about the ministry and relevant departments' plans to respond to the situation.

Heavy rains in the past few days caused a flood in

Minbu Township that carried a car away on 10 June. Floods destroyed part of an embankment at milepost (28/6) in Sedoktaya Township that damaged 50 feet of the adjacent tar road. About 100 feet of road between Nyaungpinkyin village and Shein Village was blocked and the stretch of land near Seemechaung Bridge entering Sedoktaya Town was eroded as well.

To the east of Laukpale Village the 180 feet Zeechaung dam, 180 feet Word Vision sponsored dam, and the 450 feet World Bank sponsored were damaged. Roads leading to Bonebaw Village in Ngaphe

Township and Myayket Village were also temporarily closed due to damage from the rain.

As of yesterday, around 100 motor vehicles were stranded on their way from Yangon to Magway.

Rains also caused a small landslide in East Ingone Village and authorities relocated six households from the affected area.

In An Township, rains destroyed about 20 feet of the An-Mai road at (22/5-6) milepost. Authorities concerned are constructing a bailey bridge in the affected area which may take two days for completion. — Myanmar News Agency ■

G-7 welcomes recent commitments made by Myanmar to Rakhine issue

G-7 SUMMIT held in La Malbaie, Quebec, Canada from 8 to 9 June 2018 issued a Communique in which it welcomed the recent commitments made by Myanmar Government.

In the Communique, the leaders of G-7 also pledged to coordinate efforts to build lasting peace and support democratic transition in Myanmar, particularly to allow safe and unhindered humanitarian access and the safe, voluntary and dignified return of displaced persons from Rakhine State.

The Myanmar Government signed an MoU with UNHCR and UNDP on 6 June 2018 to assist the Government's

efforts for the implementation of the Arrangement for repatriation of Displaced Persons between Myanmar and Bangladesh. The Myanmar Government also announced on 31 May 2018 that it has decided to establish an Independent Commission of Enquiry as part of its national initiative to address matters relating to reconciliation, peace, stability and development in Rakhine State.

These initiatives taken by the Myanmar Government were also welcomed by the United Nations and many countries including the United States of America, France, People's Republic of China and Japan. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Rakhine Chief Minister meets local people of Thandwe Township

RAKHINE State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu met with the local people of the villages in Thandwe Township in Thandwe's Dwayawadi Hall yesterday.

During the meeting, the chief minister encouraged the participants to talk about the strengths and weaknesses of the regional development processes carried out in the last two years. He said the union government has been and is continuing to work on the rule of law, peace process, and the basic infrastructure in Rakhine.

Next, Thandwe District Deputy Commissioner U Nyi Nyi

Htwe explained the completed works, the progress, and plans for the projects in the 2018-2019 fiscal year. Township Administrator U Aung Kyaw Than explained the regional statistics and the regional development progress.

Later, the local people discussed their needs regarding regional development, education, healthcare and confiscated land. Chief Minister U Nyi Pu, state ministers U Kyaw Lwin, U Aung Kyaw Zan, Dr. Chan Thar, U Win Myint and other officials then responded to the questions posed by the residents. — Myanmar News Agency ■



Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu delivers the speech at the meeting with local people in Thandwe Township. **PHOTO: MNA**

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edited.Pumping underground water for household use is popular in rural areas and outskirts of Yangon. **FILE PHOTO/GNLM**

Underground water to be used as reserve from 2025

By May Thet Hnin

THE Yangon population will have to reduce its use of underground water from 2025, as thereafter, such water will be used only as a reserve for emergencies, according to the advisory team of the National Water Resources Committee (NWRC).

The members of NWRC revealed this during a talk by the national-level water resources committee advisory group held on 10 June.

"Underground water is taken by Yangon residents legally and illegally. Landslides may occur due to the continued excess use of underground water. Therefore, we are planning

to nearly phase out the use of underground water and substitute another water resource instead," said U Victor Ngun Kio, a member of NWRC.

"The underground water usage will be stopped in 2025. For substitution, a new water resource project will be implemented in Kokkowa, Panhlaing and Toe rivers," he maintained.

The underground water will be used during the short-term cut-off of water supply during disasters, said U Cho Cho, chairman of the NWRC advisory group.

Currently, the quality of underground water is inferior compared with water from reservoirs due to the saltwater intrusions in certain places.

Phugyi, Hlawga and Nga-moe-yeik reservoirs supply nearly 200 million gallons of water per day in Yangon, covering 40 per cent of the Yangon population. 45 per cent of the Yangon residents are dependent on underground water.

In 2040, 610 million gallons of water was planned to be extracted per day from Toe, Panhlaing and Kokkowa rivers, with the help of Japan's water purifying techniques for distribution, said U Victor Ngun Kio said.

A delegation of NWRC representatives and officials from the Engineering Department (Water and Sanitation), operating under the Yangon City Development Committee,

visited the Amagasaki water treatment plant from which distribution pipelines link to Kobe. The delegation observed the self-balance filter with backwash tank holding type used in plants. This technology is suitable for developing countries, as the cost of maintenance and capital is low. Myanmar will adopt this technology for future distribution projects.

Yangon needs reservoirs to keep rainwater and green areas or pavements to absorb rainwater, as rainwater cannot seep through the cement roads in the Yangon city. Water experts have suggested that green pavements should be incorporated into the zoning plans. ■

Labour officer, MOEAF, agencies assist over 750 employees to get new jobs

THE labour officer, Myanmar Overseas Employment Agencies Federation (MOEAF) and overseas agencies have assisted over 750 employees to get new jobs.

Over 750 employees, including employees who arrived under the memorandum of understanding system, are unemployed because the Thai authorities have closed the computer and electronics equipment refinery factory in

Pin Young township, Thailand, due to chemical poisoning and pollution on 22 May 2018.

To solve the difficulties, labour attaché U San Maung Oo, the labour officer, officers from MOEAF and overseas agencies went to the employees and provided timely assistance.

Labour attaché U San Maung Oo, MOEAF, and the overseas agencies met with Thailand social welfare and Thailand labour protection and

welfare department, as well as factory employers, to get the salaries and compensation for the employees.

The agencies have also provided food and cash assistance to the employees. The agencies are negotiating for the employees to get suitable jobs with the permission of the labour attaché.

With the assistance of the overseas agencies, 124 employees obtained new jobs in the

CPF chicken factory, 24 in NS mobile earphone factory, nine in a stationery factory, 50 in a refrigerator accessory factory, 35 in the finished leather industry, 56 in a car accessory factory, 20 in SCG Siemen factory, 40 in a PDC bottle factory and 10 in a child diaper factory.

36 employees who were requested to go back home will be sent to Myanmar by the MOEAF and the Myanmar overseas agencies.—GNLM ■

Rice, broken rice worth \$164 million exported in past two months

THE rice and broken rice exports in the past two months were valued at US\$164 million, with the export volume being over 478,300 metric tonnes, according to an announcement of the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

Between 1 April and 1 June 2018, over 369,700 metric tonnes of rice were exported to 35 countries, while 108,500 metric tonnes of broken rice were shipped to 13 foreign countries. The border trade surpassed sea trade, accounting for 53.7 per cent of the total export. The export through the border checkpoints earned an estimated \$91.5 million, whereas the sea trade saw an income of \$72.6 million.

The main challenges in the rice industry are pedigree seeds, high input costs, high production costs, the lack of technology, high transaction costs and logistic problems, said an expert.



Numerous piles of rice paddy are left to dry in the sun after they've been reaped to keep them from spoiling. **PHOTO: PHOE HTAUNG**

Last year, there were only 29 foreign rice buyer countries. Myanmar's rice is now shipped to over 45 countries through the sea route.

Rice is the chief export among the country's agriculture products. 75 per cent of

the production is for domestic consumption and the remaining is exported. In the last 2017-2018 fiscal year, 3.6 million tonnes of rice and broken rice worth \$1.13 billion were exported to foreign countries. — Ko Htet ■

Coffee beans from southern Shan State to penetrate market in France

COFFEE growers are endeavouring to export coffee beans from Ywangan, Hopong and Loilen areas in southern Shan State to France.

Coffee plantation enterprises are thriving, helping improve the regional development. Coffee has become a poppy-substitution crop, said a coffee grower from Loilen Township.

Over 43 million coffee

plants have been grown on over 2.35 million hectares by 1,200 growers from 18 villages in Hopong, 39 villages in Loilen and 62 villages in Ywangan. The coffee growers from Shan State are planning to export some 140-500 tonnes to France every year from 2018 to 2022.

As a poppy substitution crop, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime organised a coffee operative in the area

in the 2014-2015 fiscal year to develop coffee plantations in southern Shan State. The coffee association was registered at the Cooperative Department in July 2015.

Coffee plants are mostly grown in Shan and Chin states and the Ayeyawady Region. A total of 7,000 tonnes of coffee is produced per year, 50 per cent of which goes to the export market. —Myat Thu (AMIA) ■

MOLIP sends over 23,000 labourers to nine countries last month

THE Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population (MOLIP) sent a total of 23,203 local people to nine countries — Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, Japan, the UAE, Jordan, Qatar and Macau in May.

Last month, a majority of Myanmar's migrants went to

Thailand. Myanmar's migrant workers went to Malaysia, South Korea and Japan to work abroad legally.

The labour ministry also managed to create job opportunities through the online Labour Exchange Management System at labour offices.

In May, over 13,096 job op-

portunities in all regions and states were created for citizens across the country, with 518 jobs in the government sector and 12,578 jobs in the private sector.

The labour ministry is also making efforts to create more jobs and send Myanmar migrants legally to foreign countries. —GNLM ■

Tourist arrivals in May show increase against last May

TOURIST arrivals in May 2018 on tourist and business visas are up by over 1,500 tourists compared to May 2017, according to figures released by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population.

Tourist arrivals through the three international airports and border checkpoints were registered at 50,521 in May 2018, with 29,096 holding tourist visas and 21,425 holding business visas. In May 2017, a total of 48,964 foreigners arrived, including 28,446 tourist visa holders and 20,518 business visa holders.

They entered the country through the three international airports: Yangon International Airport, Mandalay International Airport and Nay Pyi Taw International Airport; and Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung and Hteekhee checkpoints.

In the past two months, some 60,294 tourist visa hold-

ers and 41,817 business visa holders arrived in the country.

Between April 2017 and March 2018, 531,951 tourists and 244,412 businessmen entered the country. During the high-season, tourist arrivals were the highest in November 2017, while the largest number of arrivals on business visas was recorded in March 2018.

The following types of tours need permission from the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, linked with local travel agencies.

They are package tours, caravan tours, yacht tours, riverine tours along Ayeyawady River and Chindwin River, cruise tours and chartered flight tours.

Passport holders from 100 countries are eligible to apply for the eVisa and businessmen from 52 countries can apply for the eVisa Business. For more details, please visit www.evisa.moip.gov.mm. — GNLM ■

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သတင်းစာများကို ဤဆိုင်များတွင်ဝယ်ယူဖတ်ရှုနိုင်ပါပြီ

• Market Place by City Mart (6.5 Mile)	• City Mart (Junction Square)
• Market Place by City Mart (Damasidi Road)	• City Mart (Junction Maw Tin)
• Market Place by City Mart (Junction City)	• City Mart (Sule Square)
• City Mart (Aung San Stadium)	• City Mart (Star City - Thanlyin)
• City Mart (47th street)	• City Mart (Waizayandar)
• City Mart (Yankin)	• City Mart (Hledan)
• City Mart (China Town)	• City Mart (Myanmar Plaza)
• City Mart (Myay Ni Gone)	• City Mart (Junction 8)
• City Mart (FMI)	• City Mart (St. John)
	• Ocean North Point (9 mile)
	• Ocean Shwegonedine

Ocean City Supercenter **City Mart Supermarket**

The Committee for Implementation of Recommendations on Rakhine State

Report to the People on the Progress of the Implementation of Recommendations on Rakhine State
(January to April 2018)

Introduction

AS the Government of Myanmar works towards achieving stability, durable peace and development across the country including Rakhine State, the Committee for Implementation of the Recommendations on Rakhine State was established with an aim to help create a peaceful, fair and prosperous future for the people living in the State. This report provides an update to the people of Myanmar regarding the progress of the implementation by the Committee, for the period of January to April 2018.

Economic and Social Development

Due compensations are granted for lands acquired from local people for projects necessary for comprehensive development of Rakhine State. Compensations for 6.06 acres of land that was acquired for Kantharyar police station in Gwa Township amounting in 2.7068 million MMK, and for 3.11 acres of acquired for Ahmyintkyun police station in Sittwe Township amounting in 7.775 million MMK are now sanctioned; and authorities are currently processing the payments to the farmers. Compensation for the land acquired for the village tract administrator office of Ahmyintkyun Village Tract in Sittwe Township is included in the FY 2018-19 budget proposal.

China International Trust and Investment Corporation (CITIC) and the Government Designated Entity (GOE) as a counterpart from Myanmar are working closely for conducting Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and Geological and Topographical (G.T) Survey for Kyaukpyu Special Economic Zone Project, in order to promote public participation, and to ensure local people can enjoy the benefits from investments and extraction of natural resource in Rakhine State.

Discussions and plans are in progress with ILO for a labor market assessment. Meanwhile, livelihood skills trainings targeting women such as trainings for production of value-added food, home science, tailoring, agricultural practices, and refresher courses for cooperatives were delivered, to increase job opportunities as a means to address low participation of women in labor force. A total of 42 training courses were conducted during this reporting period, benefitting a total of 568 women.

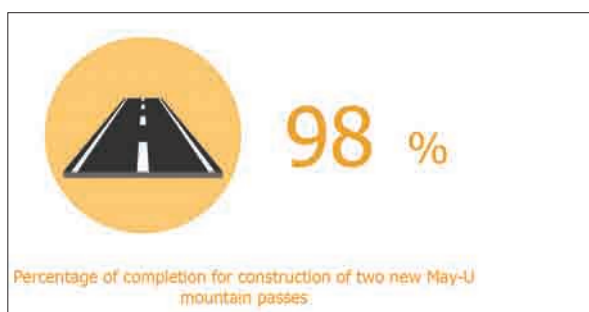


With regards to transportation sector that is crucial for socio-economic development of the state, construction of 13 bridges is now completed whereas construction of another 11 bridges is planned to be complete in FY 2018-19. With support from capital expenditure budgets of the Union and the State, 34 roads are being upgraded section by section, and two new May-U mountain passes are also being built. The construction of these two main mountain passes- Kyaukpadu-Inndin Zaydipyin Mountain Pass (9/0 mile) and Kyeinchaung-Goatpi Mountain Pass (9/7 mile)- is now 98% complete. The construction of Buthidaung-Thabaitdaung-Nyaungchaung-Aungzeya-Angumaw Road (46 miles 5 furlongs) is also almost complete. In waterways, between 22 to 25 ferry and freight lines are operating regularly; with a total fleet of

50 river freight vessels, more than 700 freight vessels with over-20-horse power engines, and more than 600 freight vessels with under-20-horse power engines providing passenger and freight transportation services.



Electricity is also another crucial sector for socio-economic development. Efforts are being made to provide 24-hour electricity from the national grid in Maung Daw area. Construction of a 66-KV transmission line from Ponnagyun to Rathaedaung is now complete; and Rathaedaung power distribution substation was opened on March 31, 2018 to provide 24-hour electricity. Similarly, construction of a 66KV, 2 x 5MVA substation in Buthidaung and a 66KV, 5MVA substation in Maung Daw are in progress, with 38% and 12.61% of total project work completed to date respectively. These projects will be completed on time to provide 24-hour electricity from the national grid to Buthidaung township at the end of June 2018; and to Maung Daw township at the end of December 2018. Rural electrification using solar power prior to electrification through the national grid is also simultaneously implemented in Rakhine State. Contracts for installation of 8092 solar power systems were now awarded through a public tender.



Projects for sufficient supply of drinking water and water for agriculture were also implemented across rural areas of Rakhine State. A total of 245 water supply projects were completed including 184 projects funded by FY 2017-18 Rakhine State Budget and Supplementary Budget through the Union Fund, 13 projects funded by UNICEF and 48 projects funded by the Union grants.



Myanma Agricultural Development Bank also sanctioned 12,853.41 million MMK as loans to 349 farmers for procurement of 349 tractors during this reporting period. Agricultural Mechanization Department also sold 156 hand-operated tractors in this period.



Efforts are taken to scale up the opportunities to access agricultural loans for all communities in Rakhine State. In January 2018, a total of 246.30 million MMK was sanctioned for 67 members of four cooperatives in two townships, for agricultural work in 821 acres of farmland. Additionally, Myanma Agricultural Development Bank also sanctioned 25 million MMK as pre-monsoon agricultural loans, from January to April 2018.



A total of 1,331 participants received technical support through 34 technical trainings, in order to help farmers from Rakhine townships with modern agricultural techniques.

77 new mobile radio stations and 28 new post offices were also expanded to improve access to telephone, internet and communications services that will support socio-economic development of local people in Rakhine State. Additionally, 84 kilometers in length of new fiber cables are now installed in Sittwe - Ahngumaw - Maungdaw - Buthidaung cable route and Maungdaw Taungpyoletwe cable route.

The Ministry of Transport and Communications granted approvals to invite Expressions of Interest (EOI) through announcements in state-owned newspapers, and to hire a consultant to prepare Request for Proposal (RFP) as an initial step for construction of a new airport in Mrauk-U township. Consultants are now preparing EOI documents in accordance with the international standards and procedures for Public Private Partnership (PPP). In addition, repair and maintenance works were also carried out at the Sittwe and Kyaukpyu Airports that are important for the transportation in the state- including repair of a runway segment damaged by landslide and additional double seal-coating of the runway at Sittwe airport, and patching (2880x100 feet) and double seal-coating (1300x50 feet) of the runway at Kyauk Phyu airport. Myanma National Airway-a state-owned carrier - transported 45,197 passengers to Sittwe, Kyaukpyu, Man Aung and Ann townships from January to April 2018; and this accounts for 9% of all domestic passengers.

(To be continued)



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat meets with Thailand Ambassador Mr. Jukr Boon-Long in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat receives Thai Ambassador to Myanmar

SPEAKER of Pyithu Hluttaw U T Khun Myat received the Ambassador of Thailand to Myanmar Mr. Jukr Boon-Long at the meeting hall of the Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting matters relating to promoting friendship and cooperation between the governments, parliaments and peoples of the two countries, economy and investment, banking and SMEs (small and medi-

um enterprises) development, cooperating for the development of travel sector; and labour rights of Myanmar workers in Thailand were openly discussed and views exchanged. —Myanmar News Agency ■

13th-day meeting of 2nd Amyotha Hluttaw's

FROM PAGE-2

U Tun Tun Oo of Mandalay region constituency (2) on the other hand asked if the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) and the Ministry of Planning and Finance had any plan against cyber attack, data and information leakage of the mobile financial service systems that are rapidly developing so that the public can use them safely and securely.

Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win replied that mobile financial service providers are required to report regularly to the CBM, and action was being taken against mobile financial service providers who failed to follow regulations, instructions and procedures made by the CBM. If there is a requirement to amend or issue new regulations, instructions and procedures, the CBM will do it in a timely manner, replied the deputy minister.

Similarly, questions raised by U Sai San Aung of Shan State constituency (12), U Saw Sein Tun of Kayah State constituency (4) and U Whey Tin of Chin State

constituency (11) were replied by Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Than Htut.

Bill amending Myanmar Red Cross Society Law

The Pyithu Hluttaw had confirmed and sent back with amendments the bill amending the Myanmar Red Cross Society Law earlier, sent by the Amyotha Hluttaw. After the question and answer session, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than announced the approval of the Hluttaw on the amendments made by the Pyithu Hluttaw on this bill after obtaining the endorsement of the Amyotha Hluttaw.

Fourth bill amending the Anti-Corruption Law

Next, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker informed the Hluttaw about the Pyithu Hluttaw sending back with amendments the fourth bill amending the Anti-Corruption Law, which was earlier confirmed and sent by the Amyotha Hluttaw. The Amyotha Hluttaw speaker requested the Hluttaw representatives who wanted to discuss

the amendments to enrol their names.

Approval of bill amending television, video law

Later, Amyotha Hluttaw speaker announced the approval of the Hluttaw on the bill amending the television and video law, approved and sent back by the Pyithu Hluttaw, after obtaining the decision of the Hluttaw.

Bill committee report on Myanmar dental, oral medical council bill

Amyotha Hluttaw bill committee member U Aung Kyi Nyunt then read the committee's report on Myanmar dental and oral medical council bill that was approved and sent by the Pyithu Hluttaw, so that the Amyotha Hluttaw could discuss it.

Following this, the Amyotha Hluttaw speaker requested the Hluttaw representatives who wanted to discuss the bill to enrol their names. The 14th-day meeting of the second Amyotha Hluttaw's eighth regular session will be held on 13 June. ■

Thura U Shwe Mann receives Thailand Ambassador

Chairman of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Thura U Shwe Mann received Thailand Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Jukr Boon-Long at the Hluttaw

Building (I-11) at 3 p.m. in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters on legislation, bilateral friendship and cooperation. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Thura U Shwe Mann meets with Thailand Ambassador Mr. Jukr Boon-Long in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Second News Writing Course opened in Nay Pyi Taw

NEWS Writing Course No. (2) was opened at the Assembly Hall of the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw at 9 am on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Information Minister U Aung Hla Tun said that in a democratic country the people elect the government and pay taxes as their contributions towards the state funding so they have the right to know how the government runs their country and how the money they contributed is allocated and spent.

"The organizations and departments which are operated with public funding, and private or public business companies which are providing public services have the responsibility to

disclose the information the people would like to know," he said.

"The organizations, departments and business companies which have the responsibility to disclose information to the public have to form information teams to systematically handle information disclosure," he added.

He said this course was specially designed to provide the participants with all necessary knowledge and basic skills required in carrying out systematic information disclosure.

A total of 22 trainees from various ministries and the Office of Union Election Commission are taking part in the course that will last from June 11 to 15. — Myanmar News Agency ■



Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun delivers the speech at the News Writing Course No. (2) in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Be positive, committed to process of re-establishing trust to solve Rakhine issue

THE Myanmar government is committed to the speedy implementation of the recent signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Myanmar and the UN agencies on the assistance for the repatriation process of displaced persons. Besides this, the Union Government has decided to form an independent commission of enquiry for Rakhine State.

The commission was formed a few months after the advisory board made their recommendations.

The Union Government is dealing with the Rakhine issue, which is complicated. What Myanmar is facing in Rakhine today is a long-standing issue that goes back a couple of centuries. People forget that it is not something that happened yesterday.

Until the refugees have been given the forms, until they've been informed fully of all the steps they need to take to come back to Rakhine, we will not be able to carry forward the process very quickly.

We must work together to build trust to achieve lasting peace, stability and development in Rakhine.

Trust is a two-way business. It is not just up to Myanmar to establish trust. The other side also has to take the necessary steps to establish trust.

For example, we understand that the forms that are required to be filled in, in accordance with the MoU agreed between Myanmar and Bangladesh, have not been distributed widely among the refugees. Unless these forms are distributed and the refugees know there's a legal and safe way for them to return to Rakhine, we will not be able to make speedy progress.

The MoU is agreed to by two or more parties, and it is imperative for all parties involved to implement their responsibilities.

The Myanmar government has carried out all its responsibilities, in line with the MoU. Everybody can see what the government has been doing if they study the MoU.

But trust is not something that can be created by just signing a piece of paper, and it's the people who have to take a risk

and decide whether or not the situation is trustworthy. If you're not prepared to try out a situation, you can never tell for sure whether it's acceptable or not.

Until the refugees have been given the forms, until they've been informed fully of all the steps they need to take to come back to Rakhine, we will not be able to carry forward the process very quickly.

Some have come back but through the official channels.

The ones who came back said they were not aware of the need to fill in the forms and to follow a certain procedure.

Everybody concerned must be positive and committed to the process of re-establishing trust. We believe that the better choice before us is to recognize the reality of the situation on the ground and accommodate each other's concerns. ■

Reinforcing Motor Vehicle Laws in the Public Transport

By Than Phyo Naing
(Kanyinkyo)

OVER recent years, there has been an increase in the number of deaths related to traffic accidents in Myanmar. I have read in the papers that traffic accidents which occurred on June 4 and 5 had claimed 15 lives. Thus we can assume that the increasing number of deaths from road accidents in Myanmar can be attributed to reckless driving and disobeying traffic rules.

As for Road Transport Administration Department, efforts have been made to get easy access to transportation flow with the aim of linking with other countries, because the road network is vital to our economy. Many roads have been upgraded into tar roads and many traffic signs or road signs have been erected on roadsides across the country.

In order to reduce casualties and to become more aware of the traffic rules and regulations, many traffic signboards have been installed across the country. The signboards are also aimed at encouraging the people to obey the traffic rules and regulations and to indicate the drivers do's and don'ts while driving.

Causes of road accidents

Many drivers show an utter disregard for road rules, speeding and wearing seatbelts. As a result, road safety is now a major public health issue. It is found that drivers often lose attention on the expressways. Other fac-



tors for its notoriety include poor maintenance, unsafe overtaking, lack of driving experience and zebra crossings. Zebra crossing means that pedestrians have to cross the road by their instinct.

As for the ministry concerned, efforts have been made to upgrade the infrastructure and build crossing bridges across the towns and cities. Most accidents were caused by human negligence and heedlessness, that's why it is of great importance to educate the public, including drivers and pedestrians alike.

Some of the most common reasons for road accidents are caused by reckless driving, drunken driving, over speeding, falling asleep while driving, disregard for traffic signs, car signal lights on the part of the pedestrians, and reluctance to use overhead pedestrian passes and reluctance to use the zebra-crossings.

Some of the most common reasons for road accidents caused by reckless driving, drunken driving, over speeding, falling asleep while driving, disregard for traffic signs, car signal lights on the part of the pedestrians, and reluctance to use overhead pedestrian passes and reluctance to use the zebra-crossings.

Safety first

The aim and objective of the law is to regulate motor vehicle related issues and make the roads more convenient for people. Myanmar is experiencing rapid motorization, which is associated with the growing economy and population. The tasks of implementation of road safety are of vital importance for the nation, being the tasks to be carried out specifically for safety of people's lives.

Precautionary measures for traffic accidents

In building new roads, special care is needed to be taken for road safety and it also needs to abide by road designs and standards. In repairing roads as well, responsible departments and organizations are needed to take care of security matters. Road signs and installation of signal lights are required to follow existing rules and laws. Deep-rooted and wrong road habits on expressways for vehicles to overpass preceding ones need to be corrected to

rightfulness. In upgrading the reduction of road accidents, establishment of an organization for raising funds for road safety needs to be carried out. In schools, lessons on road safety should be started to be included in the syllabus. Common sense should be indoctrinated at a young age that road safety knowledge is needed for all of us. Provided that every individual keeps road safety disciplines, roads and vehicles are in better conditions, accidents will surely decrease.

The Ministry of Transport and Communication has formulated future processes for success. Programs have been drawn up and implemented to reduce road accidents and fatalities. Cooperation is essential to achieve road safety for the public.

We should be aware that threats to road safety are huge and increasing, and the world is putting great emphasis on road safety to contain these threats. For the success of these processes, there is a need to train

and educate road users, to enact vehicle and traffic rules. There also is a need to inspect the vehicle usage, maintenance and installation of safety measures while proper design of roads, laying roads up to standard and regular road maintenance are required to be done without fail.

Among Southeast Asian nations, Myanmar ranks second out of 11 countries in road traffic deaths, with 20.3 deaths per 100,000 people. This amounts to more than 10,000 deaths in 2015 due to road accidents, according to a World Health Organization report from 2015.

The increasing burden of road traffic collisions and related fatalities has become a serious public health threat in Myanmar, which must be addressed through effective preventive and corrective measures, using a multi-sector approach.

For this reason, the Ministry of Health and Sports and WHO have initiated a multi-sectoral project on road safety in collaboration with the University of Public Health of Yangon, the Road Transport Administration Department under the Ministry of Transportation, the Expressway Maintenance Unit of the Ministry of Construction and the Traffic and Highway Police departments, as well as additional public and private partners.

The project aims to assess the road safety situation of the busiest expressway in the country – the Yangon-Mandalay Highway – in order to identify gaps and facilitate necessary corrective actions, in accordance with the policy recommendations of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020.

Main causes of crashes have been identified as over-speeding, tire bursting, reckless driving habits that do not respect the rules of the road and inadequate road conditions. To address this growing problem, a series of measures are being planned for implementation by the respective sectors.

Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung

A simple way to save a life: Give blood

By Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh,
Regional Director of WHO South-East Asia

Giving blood is a uniquely powerful act. Effective coordination can dramatically increase its life-saving impact

Most of us want to make a positive difference to the lives of others – people we don't know; people we may never meet. Thankfully, there's a simple, safe and effective way to make the biggest difference of all: give blood.

Doing so is a uniquely powerful act. The blood you give could save the life of a woman suffering birth complications, revive and sustain a child with severe anemia, facilitate urgent surgery, or provide critical support during a public health crisis. It is a gesture made all the more significant given blood's core components are yet to be synthesized, making voluntary donation one of the most basic expressions of human solidarity possible.

Well-coordinated blood and blood product systems can dramatically increase the act's life-saving impact. In recent years WHO South-East Asia and its Member countries have done just that, making rapid strides in enhancing the safety, quality and availability of blood products and the systems that support them, thereby helping secure access for all people everywhere to essential health services – one of WHO South-East Asia's Flagship Priorities.

Several of the Region's achievements stand out. All Member countries have now developed and are implementing national policies on blood transfusion and blood safety. Region-wide, each and every pint of blood donated is tested for the potential of transfusion-transmitted infections. Remarkably, 82% of the blood collected in the Region is from voluntary, non-remunerated donors, meaning the overwhelming majority is from persons with no family affiliation and who give their time and blood out of pure altruism. Their sense of civic responsibility is commendable.

Nevertheless, more solidarity, commitment and blood are needed: At present around 15.9 million units of blood are collected Region-wide annually, with around 18 million units required. To reach that volume, regular donations should be encouraged as a matter of duty, with advocacy among youth a particular point of focus. At the same time, given that the Region's blood banks (on average) separate just under half of all blood into its various components – a process that allows patients to receive only the plasma, platelet, red or white cells they require, leaving the rest to be used as and where needed – there is significant scope to increase the efficient use of blood already donated. That should be pursued as a matter of priority.

Beyond enhancing the sheer volume of blood collected, as well as ensuring its more efficient use, blood and blood product systems Region-wide can build on the substantial gains already made and scale up implementation of WHO's global strategy for safe blood (including by advocating for voluntary non-remunerated donations), thereby increasing timely access to safe, high-quality blood products for all.

First, through detailed planning and needs assessments, blood products can be more efficiently processed and distributed to ensure all people have access to the blood they need, when they need it. That means designating centralized blood banks responsible for the collection, processing and distribution of blood, at the same time as accurately mapping-out the volume of blood needed to cover specific catchment areas. It also means ensuring blood storage centers – including primary health care facilities – are effectively allocated and tended to so blood and blood products are readily available to communities in remote and hard-to-reach areas.

Second, haemovigilance – from donation to processing, and from storage to transfusion – should be better managed and regulated. In particular, Member countries should ensure haemovigilance measures are reported to the WHO Global Database on Blood Donor Safety, with a particular focus on ensuring all public and private facilities do the same. Similarly, they should also work to harness the latest laboratory technology to guarantee the most rigorous screening possible is carried out.

SEE PAGE 10

Over 100 people, broken boat found stranded at seashore in Yathedaung



Officials transport Islamic people to Nga Khu Ya Reception Centre for scrutinization. **PHOTO: MNA**

SECURITY forces found a boat broke apart and 104 people stranded at a sea shore in Yathedaung Township yesterday and transported them to the Nga Khu Ya Reception Centre.

Acting on an information, the security forces inspected the seashore between Agnumaw and Donpike villages in Yathedaung Township, Rakhine State, yesterday morning and found 104 people including 44 men and 60 women and a broken motorized boat which is 40 ft long and 20 ft wide and 6 ft in depth.

All Islamic people were transported in four vehicles to Ngakhuya Reception Centre in the evening to receive scrutinization by officials of the Immigration and National Registration Department.

On 21 May 2015, 228 boat people including 208 from Bangladesh were found in sea near the Thinbawgwe Village in Maungtau Township, Rakhine State. The Bangladesh people were provided with aid and were systematically handed over to their country.

Similarly, on 29 May, 2015, a total of 734 boat people from Bangladesh were found in sea south east of Pyapon, Ayeyawady Region, and they were provided with humanitarian aid and handed over to Bangladesh.— Myanmar News Agency ■

A simple way to save a life: Give blood

FROM PAGE 8+9

And third, Member countries should make concerted efforts to limit the need for blood products in the first place. The best way to do that is by providing high-quality essential services at the primary level, including attentive antenatal care, sharp-eyed disease screening and diagnosis, and effective health promotion and counselling as

a matter of routine. By taking preventive action, the need for blood transfusions will be significantly reduced, at the same time as fortifying health systems more generally.

That is, in part, why donating blood is so uniquely powerful. Beyond the symbolic act of giving, the blood collected can only be as effective as the systems that support it. To that end, Member countries Region-wide should build

on recent progress and enhance the safety, quality and availability of blood products and the systems they rely on, thereby strengthening health systems as a whole. Though giving blood may be a simple way to save a life, it is also a potent means to advance progress towards a goal for which WHO South-East Asia and its Member countries are all striving: access to essential health services for all. ■

120th anniversary of Philippines independence celebrated in Nay Pyi Taw

A CEREMONY in commemoration of the 120th anniversary of the independence of Philippines was held in Horizon Lake View Hotel, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The event starts off with the playing of the national anthems of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Republic of the Philippines.

Next, Philippines Ambassador to Myanmar H.E. Eduardo E. Kapunan Jr. and Union Minister U Kyaw Tin delivered opening speeches.

Afterwards, the Union Minister and wife and the Ambassador and wife cut the 120th anniversary Philippines Independence Day cake.

Following this, the Ambassador and wife hosted the attendees to a dinner.

The ceremony was attended by Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) Gen. Mya Tun Oo and wife, Nay Pyi Taw Command Commander Maj-Gen Myint Maw and wife, heads of departments and invited guests.— Myanmar News Agency ■



Union Minister U Kyaw Tin welcomed by Philippines Ambassador Mr. Eduardo E. Kapunan Jr. at the ceremony of 120th anniversary of the independence of Philippines. **PHOTO: MNA**

Australian delegation arrives Yangon

A DELEGATION led by Australian Senator, the Honourable Concetta Anna Fierravanti-Wells, Minister for International Development and the Pacific, arrived Yangon by air yesterday evening.

They were welcomed at the

Yangon International Airport by Australian Ambassador Mr. Nicholas Coppel, Daw Kay Thi Soe, Director-General of the Strategic Studies and Training Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and officials.— Myanmar News Agency ■



Director-General Daw Kay Thi Soe welcomes Australian Senator, the Honourable Concetta Anna Fierravanti-Wells in Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**

US offers 'unique' guarantees before historic N Korea summit

SINGAPORE — The US has offered North Korea "unique" security guarantees to try to persuade it to give up its nuclear arsenal, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Monday ahead of Tuesday's crucial summit in Singapore.

The talks were advancing faster than expected but were still ongoing with little more than 12 hours to go before Kim Jong Un sits down with Donald Trump, Pompeo told reporters.

The meeting, long sought by Pyongyang, will be the first ever between a serving US president and a North Korean leader, and will focus on the nuclear bombs and ballistic missiles the North has spent decades developing.

The Trump administration will only accept complete denuclearisation, Pompeo stressed.

In return, he said, Washington would offer "different and unique" guarantees "to provide them sufficient certainty that they can be comfortable that denuclearisation is not something that ends badly for them".

He refused to go into details. But the North has long sought an end to the US military presence in the South, where Washington has around 28,000 troops stationed to protect it from its neighbour.

Pyongyang has demanded the end of what it calls a "hostile policy" towards it, but in public has only pledged to pursue the denuclearisation of the Korean

peninsula — a euphemism open to wide differences of interpretation. Washington is eager to see if the North's pledges were "sincere", Pompeo said, adding: "The United States has been fooled before."

Verification would be key, he went on, saying many deals had been signed before only to find "the North Koreans did not promise what they said".

Trump and Kim will first meet one-on-one in a closed session, before a larger meeting with key advisers, US officials said.

A senior White House of-

ficial said Trump was "feeling good" and that the summit was open-ended, adding: "They will talk for as long as they need to."

Pompeo signalled there would be more discussions to come, adding that Tuesday's meeting "will set the framework for the hard work that will follow. We will see how far we get."

In Seoul, President Moon Jae-in had a 40-minute phone call with Trump, after telling key aides that it could take "one year, two years or even longer to completely resolve the issues concerned".



A handout photo taken by Ministry of Communications and Information of Singapore on 11 June, 2018 shows US President Donald Trump (R) shaking hands with Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong (L) following his visit to The Istana, the official residence of the prime minister, in Singapore. **PHOTO: AFP**



A handout photo taken by Ministry of Communications and Information of Singapore on 10 June, 2018 shows North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (L) being welcomed by Singapore's Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan (center-R) upon his arrival at Singapore International airport in Singapore. **PHOTO: AFP**

'Fire and fury'

Tuesday's summit is an extraordinary turnaround from last year, when Trump threatened the North with "fire and fury" and Kim dubbed him a "mentally deranged US dotard", sending fears of conflict soaring.

The summit has also raised hopes of progress towards a peace treaty to formally end the Korean War, the last festering legacy of the Cold War, after hostilities only stopped with an armistice. But critics have warned it risks becoming more of a media circus than an occasion for substantial progress. The US leader has whipsawed on expectations for the meeting, signalling that it could be the beginning of a "process" of several meetings, only to call it a "one-time shot" for peace as he embarked for Singa-



In this picture taken on 10 June, 2018 and released from North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) on 11 June, 2018, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (L) shakes hands with Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong (R) following Kim's arrival in Singapore. **PHOTO: AFP**

pore and saying he would know "within the first minute" whether an agreement would be possible.

"I just think it's going to work out very nicely," said Trump at a working lunch with the prime minister of Singapore.

The North, which has been subjected to increasingly strict sanctions by the UN Security Council and others, has made promises of change in the past, such as at the lengthy Six Party Talks process, only for the agreements to collapse later.

The previous US stance, said Bruce Klingner of the Heritage Foundation, was that "we don't deploy a president to negotiate a treaty, we deploy a president to sign a treaty where we know where every piece of punctuation is on that piece of paper".

"One of my worries is that we come out of this Singapore summit with something that looks remarkably like the Six Party Talks or anything that the president has previously criticised but it is

hyped as something that's historic and new and groundbreaking," he added.

Separate planes

The North's official KCNA news agency called the summit "historic", saying it would take place in a "changed era" and "under the great attention and expectation of the whole world".

Kim would exchange "wide-ranging and profound views" on issues including "building a permanent and durable peace-keeping mechanism on the Korean peninsula" and "realising the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula", it added.

It formally referred to Trump by his full name in the Monday report, including his middle initial — the first time it has done so. Kim's sister and close aide Kim Yo Jong is also in Singapore, and is believed to have travelled separately on the ageing Soviet-made Ilyushin-62 that is the leader's personal aircraft.—AFP ■



Armed police officers patrol outside the Shangri-La hotel where US President Donald Trump will stay ahead of the US-North Korea summit in Singapore on 10 June, 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

Merkel open to EU migration reform, cautious on eurozone

FRANKFURT AM MAIN, (Germany) — German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Sunday she was more open to French President Emmanuel Macron's plans to reform migration and defence policy in Europe than his hopes to bolster the euro.

"I'm not saying that none of the things he wants will happen," Merkel said in an interview with ARD public television.

But the 40-year-old French leader has plans for the 19-nation eurozone "that he knows are not the right ones as far as I'm concerned," she added.

German and French ministers are set to meet later this month to find common ground on EU reform, ahead of a meeting of all EU leaders on 28-29 June.



German Chancellor Angela Merkel. PHOTO: AFP

Merkel singled out Macron's hope for a jointly managed investment budget of "one or two percent of gross domestic product" in the single currency area as overambitious. Many Germans fear ending up on the hook for debts run up by other EU members, and the chancellor last week suggested that a "limited" invest-

ment budget of a few tens of billions of euros would be enough. Nevertheless, Merkel rejected accusations that Germany has failed to meet ambitious French proposals with a vision of its own.

EU nations' failure to speak and act with one voice abroad is a "danger", Merkel warned, as is the fact "that we have no

collective approach to the question of managing migration," vital if freedom of movement within Europe's borders is to be upheld.

The German leader called for an EU-wide asylum authority and collective standards for granting or refusing applications for protection, as well as a joint border protection force.

"We need a real European border police that can act if necessary even if it displeases one of the (EU) states with external borders." Conflict over how to share the burden of asylum seekers has caused rifts in the EU, with border states like Italy and Greece complaining they are overstressed while east European nations reject any move to redistribute migrants among member countries.—AFP ■

US fighter jet crashes off Japan coast

TOKYO, Japan — A US F15 fighter jet crashed off the southern coast of Japan on Monday but the pilot ejected and was rescued by Japanese forces, Tokyo's defence minister said. The Japanese military "received information that a crew member of the F15 jet, which belongs to the Kadena Air Base, ejected above the sea some 50 miles (80 kilometres) south of" Naha, the regional capital of Japan's southern Okinawa island, Itsunori Onodera told reporters.

About an hour after receiving the initial information, Japanese military officials spotted and rescued the pilot who sustained "non-life-threatening" injuries, Onodera said. Japan's public broadcaster NHK said the rescued pilot had a broken leg.

Kadena is the largest US military base in Japan, and hosts around 47,000 American troops under a decades-long security alliance. A series of accidents involving US military aircraft have stoked tensions and in January Defence Secretary James Mattis apologised to his Japanese counterpart over the incidents. They have included emergency landings by US military helicopters, a piece of a helicopter falling on a Japanese school ground, and a deadly crash last year of an MV-22 Osprey that forced a massive rescue operation. The US military is investigating the cause of the latest accident "but I've requested they share information with us and that they take firm safety measures to prevent a repeat," Onodera said.—AFP ■

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE (INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)

(11/ 2018)

1. Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars and Myanmar Kyats.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB/003(18-19)	Assorted Sizes of Steel Casings and Accessories (8) Items	US\$
(2)	DMP/L-037(18-19)	Fishing Tool (Taper Tap) and Ex-Proof Monitoring System Spares (2) Groups	Ks
(3)	DMP/L-038(18-19)	Well Head, Driller Control and Drawwork Spares (6) Groups	Ks
(4)	DMP/L-039(18-19)	Stabilizers for Drilling Rigs (2) Groups	Ks
(5)	DMP/L-040(18-19)	Spares for K 280 and K 380 Pump (2) Groups	Ks
(6)	DMP/L-041(18-19)	Brandt Shale Shaker Screen (4) Items	Ks
(7)	DMP/L-042(18-19)	Electrical Spares for USS Oil Well Rig (4) Items	Ks
(8)	DMP/L-043(18-19)	Main Bearing for N-69 Swivel (1) No	Ks
(9)	DMP/L-044(18-19)	Gear Oil (PGO 140) (GL-5) (500) Drums	Ks
(10)	DMP/L-045(18-19)	SAE 15 W 40 Diesel Engine Oil (1000) Drums	Ks
(11)	DMP/L-046(18-19)	Hydraulic Oil Light (H.O.L) (500) Drums	Ks

2. The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available free download at the Ministry of Electricity and Energy Website Portal (www.moee.gov.mm) as from 11 June 2018. Tender forms will not be sold.

3. The interested Bidders should submit the **Technical Specifications with Original Bid Bond and Commercial Quotation in each separate sealed envelopes** on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than **14:00 pm on 9 July 2018**.

4. Tender Closing Date & Time- 9-7-2018, 14:00 pm

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph . +95 67 - 411206
+95 67 411212

INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER (3/2018) [TENDER NO. MPPE / HSD / T / 1 (2018 - 2019)]

1. Open Tender is invited for the Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise, Ministry of Electricity and Energy for the supply of High Speed Diesel (752,000 ± 10% Barrels)

2. Tender Closing Date & Time - 11- 7 - 2018, 12:00 Hrs

3. Tender Opening Date & Time - 11 - 7 - 2018, 13:00 Hrs

4. Delivery Time - Aug 2018 to Jan 2019

5. The Open Tender forms, Section(I) Instructions to Bidders and Section(II) Form of Contract for the Supply of High Speed Diesel including Delivery Schedule, Quantity, Details Specification and Tender Terms & Conditions, can be available free download at the Ministry of Electricity and Energy Website Portal (www.moee.gov.mm) as from 12-6-2018. Tender forms will not be sold.

6. The interested Bidders should submit the **Technical Proposal with Original Bid Bond and Commercial Proposal in each separate sealed envelopes** on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise not later than 11-7-2018, 12: 00 hours. Late bids will be rejected. Any Bid are applied by e-mail or mail cannot be accepted.

7. Bid will be opened on 11-7-2018 at 13:00 hours after the deadline for bid submission in the presence of Bidder's representative. The representatives of bidders need to attend the Tender opening Meeting without absence.

Managing Director
Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise
Ministry of Electricity and Energy
No(6) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw

Contact Phone No.
067-3411487 / 3411280

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Abe hopes for successful US-N Korea summit after talks with Trump

TOKYO — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe expressed hope on Monday that the US-North Korea summit will succeed and serve as a "major step" toward peace and stability in Northeast Asia as he spoke over the phone with US President Donald Trump.

After getting an update on preparations for the much anticipated summit in Singapore, Abe said the two leaders also reaffirmed that Trump will raise the issue of Pyongyang's past abductions of Japanese nationals.

"I believe that Japan and the United States, along with South Korea, have completely shared and agreed on the basic policy (for the summit)," Abe told reporters at the prime minister's office.

"I hope that the (US-North Korea) summit



Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

tomorrow will become a historic summit and a major step toward peace and stability in Northeast Asia," Abe said. Japan has been trying to strengthen coordination with the United States in the run-up to Trump's meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. Abe flew to Wash-

ington to talk with Trump last week.

Resolving the issue of abductions that took place in the 1970s and 1980s is a priority for Abe, who has said he wants to meet with Kim to achieve an early resolution of it. The issue has prevented the two countries from establishing

diplomatic ties.

During a parliamentary session on Monday, Foreign Minister Taro Kono revealed plans for the Japanese and US leaders to speak over the phone after Tuesday's summit where North Korea's denuclearization is high on the agenda.—Kyodo News ■

Five shot dead in Thailand's Deep South

BANGKOK, (Thailand) — Five men were shot dead early Monday in Thailand's Muslim-majority south, police said, as violence in the troubled region surges towards the end of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

The bodies, with bullet wounds to the head, were found outside a house in Bannang Sata district of Yala province.

"We believe the shooting was a result of a dispute over underground business," Lieutenant Colonel Akepong Wae-dang told AFP, without elaborating.

Akepong said two of the victims lived in the property while the other

three were neighbours.

A shadowy conflict in the country's southern provinces has killed some 7,000 people since 2004 as militants seek more autonomy from Bangkok in the culturally distinct region.

Civilians have borne the brunt of the violence over the years.

But the ethnically Malay region is also a transit point for illicit trade and provides a hideout for both rebels and crime gangs in an area awash with weapons.

Last Thursday four members of a Muslim family were killed while panning for gold in Narathiwat province.—AFP ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V VALENTINA R VOY.NO. (218019)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V VALENTINA R VOY.NO. (218019) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12-6-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-2 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S WILHELMSSEN SHIPS
SERVICE(S) PTE LTD.**

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V KUO HSIUNG VOY.NO. (1086 S/N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KUO HSIUNG VOY.NO. (1086 S/N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12-6-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA
SHIPPING LINE**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

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No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S COSCOL (H K)
INVESTMENT & DEVELOPMENT CO LTD.**

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V MCC HALONG VOY.NO. (1815-1816)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCC HALONG VOY.NO. (1815-1816) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12-6-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT
(S'PORE) PTE LTD**

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"Cereal based snack foods; grain based snack foods; salsa; crackers; cookies; cereal bars; granola-based snack bars; ready to eat, cereal derived food bars; processed cereal-based food to be used as a breakfast food, snack food or ingredient for making other foods; frozen meals consisting primarily of pasta or rice; corn chips, flour-based chips, grain-based chips, taco chips, and tortilla chips" in **Class 30**.

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Daw La Min May, H.G.P

For **Food Should Taste Good, Inc.**,

C/o **Kelvin Chia Yangon Ltd.**,

Level 8A, Union Financial Centre (UFC),

Corner of Mahabandoola Road and Thein Phyu Road,

Botataung Township, Yangon,

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Dated 12th June 2018

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C/o **Kelvin Chia Yangon Ltd.**,

Level 8A, Union Financial Centre (UFC),

Corner of Mahabandoola Road and Thein Phyu Road,

Botataung Township, Yangon,

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Dated 12th June 2018

Imm@kcyangon.com

Egyptian band in Israel musical wins big on Broadway

NEW YORK — A heart-warming musical about an Egyptian band visiting an Israeli desert town triumphed on New York's Broadway late Sunday, sweeping the board with 10 Tony Awards, the highest honors in American theatre.

It was an extraordinary success for a quiet, contemplative, 90-minute production aching with longing for human connection and understanding, far removed from the brash commercialization of its competitors.

"Harry Potter and the Cursed Child" was the other big winner of the biggest night in Broadway, going home with six gongs, including best play from the star-studded 72nd annual Tony Awards.

Nominated eleven times, "The Band's Visit" triumphed over "Mean Girls" and "SpongeBob SquarePants: The Broadway Musical" — the two most nominated shows — for the prestigious best new musical prize.

"Our show offers a message



Cast and creative team of "The Band's Visit" pose for photos in the 72nd Annual Tony Awards Media Room, at 3 West Club in New York on 10 June, 2018. PHOTO: AFP

of unity in a world that more and more seems bent on amplifying our differences. In the end, we are far more alike than differ-

ent," said producer Orin Wolf in accepting the award.

Its Arab-influenced score, spliced with klezmer, is the work

of composer-lyricist David Yazbek, based on the book by writer Itamar Moses and directed by David Cromer. All three won

Tonys.

Dialogue is in heavily-accented English, with smatterings of spoken Arabic and Hebrew, evoking the atmosphere of being in the Middle East.

While the Arab-Israeli conflict is never referenced, human connections forged through music and culture prove a bridge when the Egyptian musicians wind up in the wrong town owing to a pronunciation error.

"I am part of a cast of actors who never believed that they'd be able to portray their own races," said Ari'el Stachel, an Israeli-American who won a Tony for his Broadway debut as Egyptian band member Haled.

"We're getting messages from kids all over the Middle East thanking us and telling us how transformative our representation is for them," Katrina Lenk, who delivers a star turn as Israeli cafe owner Dina, and Tony Shalhoub as band leader Tewfiq, also took home Tonys.—AFP ■

The women of 'Ocean's 8' steal a big lead at the box office



Sandra Bullock, star of top box-office draw "Ocean's 8," is seen at the recent premiere of the film in New York. PHOTO: AFP

LOS ANGELES—The women of "Ocean's 8" proved this weekend that they know how to steal the show—and much more—as the new heist flick took in an estimated \$41.5 million in North American theaters.

With an all-star cast led by ever-popular Sandra Bullock and supported by Cate Blanchett, Anne Hathaway, Helena Bonham Carter, Mindy Kaling and Rihanna, the Warner Bros. film was Hollywood's latest experiment—after "Ghostbusters"—in replacing an all-male cast with female stars.

The result: one of the top 10 openings of the year so far, which also best three earlier "Ocean's" editions.

The film stars Bullock as Debbie Ocean, sister of Danny Ocean (originally played by George Clooney), as she assembles a gang of talented women to plan a seemingly impossible diamond heist from a glamorous gala in New York.

In second place in the three-day weekend was last weekend's leader, "Solo: A Star Wars Story," starring Alden Ehrenreich as a young version of

the swashbuckling space pilot. The Disney film took in \$15.2 million, roughly half its previous weekend's total.

Third spot went to "Deadpool 2" from 20th Century Fox, at \$13.7 million. This latest in Marvel's X-men series stars Ryan Reynolds in the title role. Its worldwide ticket sales have surpassed \$650 million.

In fourth was a new film, "Hereditary," at \$13 million the best opening ever for the A24 production company. The horror film, about a family haunted after its matriarch dies, stars Toni Collette and Gabriel Byrne. Its decent opening came in spite of an R-rating and less-than-glowing reviews, including a D+ from CinemaScore.

In fifth was Disney/Marvel blockbuster "Avengers: Infinity War," at \$6.8 million. With a cast including Robert Downey Jr, Benedict Cumberbatch and Scarlett Johansson, the superstar-rich extravaganza has now taken in \$1.998 billion worldwide.

Also of note: Focus Features' tender documentary "Won't You Be My Neighbor," about the life of "Mister Rogers" host Fred Rogers, took in \$470,000 as it opened on just 29 screens (a better per-screen average than any other top-25 film). It has a remarkable 99 percent "fresh" rating on Rotten Tomatoes.

Rounding out the top 10 were:

"Adrift" (\$5.1 million)

"Book Club" (\$4.2 million)

"Hotel Artemis" (\$3.2 million)

"Upgrade" (\$2.2 million)

"Life of the Party" (\$2.1 million)

AFP ■

Indian billionaire jeweller seeks asylum in Britain: report

MUMBAI (India) — Indian billionaire jeweller Nirav Modi, wanted over an alleged massive bank fraud, has fled to Britain where he is seeking asylum, according to a report on Monday.

Modi, whose celebrity clients have included actress Naomi Watts and Kate Winslet, is accused of involvement in a \$1.8 billion scam against Punjab National Bank (PNB), India's second-largest state-run lender.

The 47-year-old has been on the run since the scandal broke in February, rocking India's corporate world.

The Financial Times newspaper cited officials in India and Britain as saying that Modi had sought asylum in Britain for what he called "political persecution".

Indian officials were not immediately available to comment.

A spokesman for Britain's Home Office said: "We do not comment on individual cases."

It comes as India's government seeks the extradition of liquor tycoon Vijay Mallya over unpaid loans to his beleaguered Kingfisher Airlines after he absconded to Britain in 2016.

Indian investigators are probing allegations that Modi and his uncle and business partner Mehul Choksi, also a diamond

merchant, defrauded PNB of 2.8 billion rupees (\$43.8 million).

This figure is said to be just a part of the total losses.

PNB said in February that Modi and Choksi had defrauded it by raising credit with international branches of other Indian banks, using illegal guarantees provided by rogue PNB employees.

Investigators have arrested 25 people for enabling the defrauding of the bank with forged documents.

Modi, the third generation of his family to go into the diamond trade, is worth \$1.73 billion according to Forbes, placing him 85th on India's rich list.

His high-end eponymous Nirav Modi brand has stores in several of the world's major cities and boasted of celebrity clients including Watts, Winslet, and Bollywood star Priyanka Chopra.

India's government is trying to reduce the crippling debts of the country's embattled state banks, including PNB.

It recently announced a \$32 billion recapitalisation plan to help them clean up their books ahead of the general election in 2019.

Last month PNB posted the largest ever quarterly loss for an Indian lender.—AFP ■

18th century Chinese moon flask sells for 4.1 million euros

PARIS — A rare porcelain moon flask that belonged to the 18th century Chinese Emperor Qianlong has been sold for 4.1 million euros (\$4.8 million) after a bidding war at an auction in France.

The blue, white and celadon flask — more than 200-years-old — was bought by a French woman who outbid 17 Chinese buyers during a sale that lasted about ten-minutes, according to auctioneers who described the buy as “historic and legendary”.

The final sale including fees totalled more than 5 million euros — ten times the auction’s opening price of 500,000 euros. Emperor Qianlong, one of the longest serving Chinese emperors who ruled for much of the 18th Century, was an avid art collector.

The round-shaped moon flask has eight Buddhist symbols

in stylised lotus petals and bears the seal of the emperor. It was discovered by chance in April in a French castle during a valuation of antiques and its original owners remain anonymous.

The buyer, who bid over the phone during the auction at Artigny chateau in Montbazon, central France, expected to keep the flask at her apartment in Paris but it could potentially be loaned to a museum in future, the auctioneer said. According to the auctioneer Philippe Rouillac, the flask was probably brought back from China by a French navy officer. Far East art specialist Alice Jossaume said the flask is one of two flasks from Emperor Qianlong that exist.

The other flask was sold for 1.8 million euros at Sotheby’s in Hong Kong in 2016.—AFP ■



A rare blue, white and celadon porcelain moon flask belonging to the Emperor Qianlong was sold at Artigny’s castle in Montbazon. PHOTO: AFP

Harry and Meghan to head Down Under later this year: palace

LONDON — Prince Harry and his new wife Meghan will visit Australia, Fiji, Tonga and New Zealand later this year for their first overseas tour as a married couple, Kensington Palace announced on Monday.

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex, who were married at Windsor Castle last month, have timed their trip to coincide with the Invictus Games in Sydney in October.

Harry, the second son of heir-to-the-throne Prince Charles, set up the global sports championship for wounded personnel after a decade in the army.

All four countries on the tour are members of the Commonwealth, the 53-nation grouping for which Harry is a youth ambassador.

Harry is following in his parents’ footsteps, after Charles and his then wife Diana visited Australia and New Zealand in their first tour as a married couple.

Charles was in Australia earlier this year to open the Commonwealth Games, his 16th tour of the country.

Harry’s older brother Prince William and his wife Kate also drew huge crowds during a 2014 visit to Australia and New Zealand with their baby Prince George.

“The Duke and Duchess of Sussex will undertake an official visit to Australia, Fiji, the



The Duke and Duchess of Sussex, Prince Harry and his new wife Meghan, will visit Australia, Fiji, Tonga and New Zealand. PHOTO: AFP

Kingdom of Tonga, and New Zealand in the autumn,” the palace statement said.

“Their Royal Highnesses have been invited to visit the realms of Australia and New Zealand by the countries’ respective governments.

“The Duke and Duchess will visit the Commonwealth countries of Fiji and Tonga at the request of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

“The tour will fall on the occasion of the Invictus Games Sydney 2018.”

Australia and New Zealand welcomed the trip, saying that both their nations would warmly receive the royal couple.

“The Duke of Sussex... at-

tendance (at the Games), alongside The Duchess of Sussex, will be a wonderful highlight for the more than 500 competitors and thousands of spectators,” Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said in a statement. “I know the Australian people will greet Their Royal Highnesses with great warmth and excitement wherever they go during their time here.”

New Zealand leader Jacinda Ardern said Prince Harry had enjoyed his last visit in 2015.

“This is the Duchess’s second visit to our country and I know New Zealanders will be very much looking forward to welcoming her back,” she added in a statement.—AFP ■

Thai turtle’s plastic-filled stomach highlights ocean crisis

BANGKOK — Startling images of plastic shreds, rubber bands and other debris found jammed in the stomach of a green turtle in Thailand have highlighted the crisis of waste-strewn seas following the widely publicised death of a whale this month.

Thailand is one of the world’s largest consumers of plastic, which kills hundreds of marine mammals and reptiles swimming off its coasts every year.

The problem grabbed public attention in the first week of June when an autopsy of a dead pilot whale found near the border with Malaysia revealed 80 plastic bags inside its stomach.

The green turtle, a protected species, suffered a similar fate after washing up on a beach in the eastern province of Chanthaburi on 4 June, Weerapong Laovechprasit, a veterinarian at the Eastern Marine and Coastal

Resource Research and Development Centre, told AFP.

Plastic, rubber bands, pieces of balloon and other rubbish had filled the turtle’s intestinal tract, leaving it unable to eat and causing its death two days later.

“It was feeling weak and couldn’t swim,” Weerapong said. “The main cause of death is the sea trash.”

Veterinarians discovered the blockage using X-rays and tried to save the turtle by feeding it intravenously, but were only able to extract the garbage after its death.

Weerapong said that in the past about 10 per cent of the green turtles stranded on beaches in the area had ingested plastic or suffered infections after coming into contact with the waste, but this year about 50 per cent of the incidents were trash-related.—AFP ■



The green turtle washed up on a beach in Chanthaburi province on 4 June and died two days later. PHOTO: AFP

How the World Cup favourites are shaping up

THE phoney war is over and most of the big guns have arrived in Russia ahead of the start of the World Cup on Thursday. AFP Sport takes a look at how the favourites are shaping up.

Brazil

In 2014, Brazil were being widely tipped for success on home soil but their campaign unravelled in spectacular fashion with a 7-1 semi-final defeat to eventual winners Germany. Now the five-time champions look the real deal again. Coach Tite has transformed their fortunes and they are confident mood.

The absence of the injured Dani Alves at right-back is a blow but Neymar has proven



Neymar in action for Brazil in Sunday's friendly against Austria in Vienna. **PHOTO: AFP**

his fitness in recent friendly matches, scoring in wins against Croatia and Austria. His goal in Vienna on Sunday, after

his first start following a foot operation three months ago, was stunning.

Manchester City's Gabriel Jesus has been the most prolific goalscorer during Tite's time in charge, in which the team have won 17 out of 21 matches.

"We are handling the expectation. It's good. We are going to challenge ourselves," said the coach after Sunday's final warm-up game. "There is only one little detail. A new stage begins now."

Germany

Germany are the holders and their reputation as a team that always delivers on the big stage tempers the doubts arising from their performances in recent friendlies.

Joachim Loew's side went five games without a win before labouring to a 2-1 victory over Saudi Arabia in their final warm-up in Leverkusen on Friday.

The fact that first-choice goalkeeper Manuel Neuer has hardly played since September after injury is a concern but the Germans have made at least the semi-finals in each of the past four World Cups and are bound to feature prominent-



Timo Werner celebrates after scoring Germany's opening goal against Saudi Arabia. **PHOTO: AFP**

ly again in Russia. And their recent friendly results? "I am conscious of the fact that in friendly matches it is not neces-

sarily about the result," coach Loew — who has left Manchester City's Leroy Sane behind — reminded Kicker.



Iago Aspas (2nd R) takes the acclaim of his Spain teammates after netting the winner against Tunisia on Saturday. **PHOTO: AFP**

Spain

Like Brazil, Spain have come to Russia with something to prove after a poor showing in 2014, when they were knocked out in the group stage.

They are yet to lose in two years under Julen Lopetegui, completing their preparations with a 1-0 win over Tunisia on Saturday in Krasnodar.

It was not the most convincing performance but Iago Aspas advanced his case for a starting role in attack in Friday's Group B opener against

Portugal with a late winner.

Rodrigo of Valencia and the bruising Diego Costa are the other options up front for Lopetegui. The coach has overseen changes but there are still likely to be as many as seven starters against Portugal who also started the 2-0 defeat against Italy at Euro 2016.

"Whatever we happen to do in this World Cup will depend on the answers we give on the field. We are going with a ticket to play three matches and the rest we have to earn," Lopetegui told El Pais.

Argentina

Argentina are lucky to be in Russia at all after a chaotic qualifying campaign and their build-up to the finals has been far from smooth. The cancellation of last week's friendly against Israel in Jerusalem brought bad publicity and also denied Jorge Sampaoli's side much-needed match practice. The build-up has been further hampered by the loss to injury of Manuel Lanzini and critics say Argentina are relying solely on Lionel Messi for success. That may be unfair though. Sampaoli has talent in his squad, including the exciting Giovanni Lo Celso in midfield and an attack also featuring Gonzalo Higuain, Sergio Aguero, Paulo Dybala and Angel Di Maria. However, even if they manage to win a challenging group, Spain could lie in wait in the quarter-finals for the 2014 runners-up.



Man on a mission - Lionel Messi arrives in Russia. **PHOTO: AFP**

France

Optimism has been growing in France about the prospects of Les Bleus, but Saturday's 1-1 draw with the United States was a timely reminder for Didier Deschamps' side that they still have work to do. They needed a late

Kylian Mbappe goal to earn a draw in their final friendly, which followed wins against Ireland and Italy. Sports daily L'Equipe called it a "cold blast" before the French travelled to Russia on Sunday. Paul Pogba's performance in that game was a boost, though, and Deschamps appears to have found a formation that suits him. A diamond midfield accommodates Pogba and allows Antoine Griezmann to play just behind Mbappe and Olivier Giroud up front, but there is maybe a worry in goal, where Hugo Lloris no longer looks so reliable. Nevertheless, they are capable of reaching the last four. —AFP ■



Antoine Griezmann, Hugo Lloris and Paul Pogba at the end of France's 1-1 draw with the USA in Lyon. **PHOTO: AFP**